

## **CHAPTER 7: MICHIGAN SCORP PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT PROCESS**

Public involvement in the SCORP planning process included surveys that were mailed to a randomly selected number of registered voters, surveys sent to local recreation providers, availability of the SCORP on the DNR web site with a process for written comments, a series of five public workshops held throughout the state, and presentations at several commission/advisory group meetings. All of the public presentations were widely advertised, including written notification to a large group of stakeholders, a web posting and a press release (see Appendix D).

The meetings were facilitated by Dr. Chuck Nelson or staff from DNR Grants Management and included a PowerPoint presentation concerning the SCORP planning process, key information from the community outdoor recreation plan review, the survey of registered voters, the survey of local park and recreation agency directors, and the draft issues and goals of the Michigan SCORP. Printed copies of the presentation also were made available to the attending public. Grants Management staff also recorded the comments and served as resource persons in regards to any technical questions.

The comments received during the above mentioned public input opportunities were broadly directed at the following areas:

- Overwhelming support for all types of trails and specifically the North Country National Scenic Trail (NCNST) and the need to recognize the level of volunteer support for the trail and the national significance of the trail in terms of tourism and economic benefits. We recognize the opportunity for improved relationship with supporters of the NCNST, and the Trails Initiative in the SCORP will reflect Michigan's continued commitment to providing quality trail opportunities.
- Overwhelming support from the mountain biking community and the need to recognize the level of volunteer support for mountain bike trails, and the lack of adequate opportunities to meet the demand. Again, the Trails Initiative is intended to address all types of trail opportunities, including mountain bike trails and the LWCF project selection process will specifically address the development of all types of trails.
- The need to support the renovation of park infrastructure and community-based recreation. Local park infrastructure will be specifically added to the Community Recreation Initiative to reflect this priority and the LWCF project selection process will address both renovation and community based recreation.
- Strong advocacy for both more rustic tent camping and more full-size RV camping.
- Support for a minimal increase in hunting and fishing license fees as well as support for fewer restrictions on these opportunities.
- The need to support the acquisition of critical inholdings and environmentally significant natural areas.
- The need to continually monitor and safeguard existing parks from encroachment by development and outside pressures to convert parkland to non-recreation uses.

- The importance of Michigan's park and recreation providers to incorporate environmental education and the use of environmentally sensitive elements in the design and development of parks.

Several comments were received regarding the format of the document, specifically the landscape layout and the heavy use of tables. This was addressed by a thorough reformatting of the document to portrait format and the use of page breaks and a better explanation of the survey data.

One responder noted the SCORP should provide the framework for the Department's boundary review process and LWCF conversion policy. Although these are important aspects of administering the LWCF, the authors believe the boundary review process already is well-documented through other department documents. Michigan will continue to use the guidance provided by the National Park Service for the framework and processes related to the LWCF conversion process.

Various comments also were received related to wildlife management, cooperation with planning agencies, the use of parks as an economic development tool, and other items that may be considered more appropriate in other management plans specific to that purpose.

The final process included the following:

1. A presentation before the Michigan Natural Resources Commission, the constitutionally empowered body that provides guidance to the Michigan DNR, at which time public testimony was heard.
2. Review and approval of the final document by DNR Director Rebecca Humphries.
3. Submittal of the final document to Governor Jennifer Granholm for approval.
4. Submission of the final document to the National Park Service.

